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DD/S-55-1776

EO.8086

15 August 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Proposal for the Organization of an Action Operations Unit.

REFERENCE : Memo dtd 11 Aug 55 to D/DCI fr D/Trg, same subject.

1. I concur in the desirability of providing an "action" unit within the Agency and of training personnel for service in it so that we may "act" with efficiency and dispatch when called upon to do so. Inasmuch as I, personally, am not familiar with previous "action" operations, I defer to the judgment of the Director of Training and the Deputy Director (Plans) as to how we should accomplish this objective. However, there is still a question in my mind as to whether we can keep career-minded personnel in an activity of this type for a period of thirty months without presenting an opportunity to test their theories in an actual situation. As a layman in the field, I would have thought that a shorter course, perhaps for a six months period, for a greater variety of personnel with different area and language knowledge would have provided greater insurance towards preparedness to meet a given situation in whatever area it might develop.

2. As I understand the referenced memorandum, the plan would be to authorize the additional positions now and the unit itself would then proceed to firm up the plans and cost estimates. This would mean that no cost estimates for this activity would be available to us prior to submission of the Fiscal Year 1958 Budget. In my discussions with the Director of Training I have gained an indelible impression that such a unit would "cost a lot of money." While I realize that the development of accurate cost estimates may be impossible at this time, I do believe that it should be possible to develop an approximation.

3. As you know, I am concerned about our over-all budgetary situation. The new activities taken on during the past year, which are continuing, have had the effect of increasing our operating cost level by about [redacted] above our regular budget. This [redacted] will have to come from the Reserve. There are additional approved and pending items that will probably call for releases from the Reserve which will leave only [redacted] in it for Fiscal Year 1956. As you can see, with only one month of Fiscal Year 1956 behind us we have a relatively small Reserve left. If personnel increases and other items already requested should be approved our Fiscal Year 1956 operating cost would be increased by another [redacted] and in Fiscal Year 1957 by [redacted]. In any case, we will be asking Congress for substantially more money in Fiscal Year 1957 than we

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have in the past, and we certainly cannot be assured at this time that we will continue to enjoy the flexibility which we have had in the past.

4. I still think that it would be preferable to staff out this project rather than embark upon it without a clearer idea of where we are going. I feel that the Director should consider carefully our over-all budget situation before approving of this project without further staffing.

L. E. WHITE
Deputy Director
(Support)

1 Att:
Referenced Memorandum
(0 & 5)

cc: DE/P
✓ D/Irg

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